

## MARY A. FERDIG, Ph.D.

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### EDUCATION

Ph.D. 2001: Organization Development; Benedictine University, Chicago, IL.  
M.A. 1985: Organization Communication; University of Nebraska, Omaha  
B.S. 1980: Communication and Psychology; University of Nebraska, Omaha

### PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

2001 to Present: President/CEO, Sustainability Leadership Institute, Middlebury, VT  
Adjunct Faculty Associate, School of Public Administration; University of Nebraska, Omaha, NE  
External Examiner, Doctorate of Management Program, Hertfordshire University, Hertfordshire, UK

1997 to 2001: Principal, Ferdig, Inc., Leadership and Organizational Consulting, Omaha, NE  
Adjunct Faculty Associate, Benedictine University, Lisle (Chicago), IL and University of Nebraska, Omaha, NE  
Adjunct Faculty Associate, Communication Dept. College of Arts and Sciences, University of Nebraska, Omaha, NE

1990 to 1997: Manger, Organization and Human Resources Development, Omaha Public Power District, Omaha, NE

1986 to 1990: Consultant-Specialist, Organization and Management Development, Omaha Public Power District, Omaha, NE

1980 to 1986: Communication Consultant; Instructor, Communication Dept. College of Arts and Sciences, University of Nebraska, Omaha, NE

### AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

Keynote Presentations: Deliver simulating presentations to audiences interested in sustainability, leadership and the link between the two in today's world. **Results:** *expanded knowledge/mental perspectives revealed by questions, large audience 'conversations' and post presentation feedback and evaluations.*

Conference Facilitation: Design and facilitate conferences and dialogue forums centered on inquiry and learning in lively, authentic conversation people engaging from their individual sources of passion and truth. **Results:** *Engaged participants who report deep learning.*

Strategic Visioning: Consult strategic and long-range visioning processes for corporate and non-profit executives, boards of directors and business unit teams. **Results:** *Expanded knowledge of underlying issues impacting long-term organizational success. Substantive "living" documents that serve as management guidelines for ongoing decision making.*

Whole-system Change: Facilitate large-system dialogue projects in corporate and non-profit organizations in which participants generate a collective understanding of current circumstances and definitive actions for future direction. **Results:** *Participants jointly construct and implement strategic actions, carrying out respective roles and responsibilities needed to achieve goals.*

Leadership Development: Provide leadership development for executive and mid-level management teams. Facilitate resolution of role and interpersonal conflict issues. **Results:** *Leaders and executive teams significantly improved cross functional communication, cooperation and leadership effectiveness. Organizations and work groups perform according to performance*

standards.

Curriculum Development:	Design comprehensive management and supervisory program curricula focused on core competencies related to leadership, performance management, communication, and change management. <b>Results:</b> Executives, managers and supervisors demonstrate significant improvement in targeted competencies measured by company surveys.
Education	Facilitate learning in workshop settings designed for corporate populations and community leaders; address a broad array of learning topics relevant to needs and requests. <b>Results:</b> participants rate learning experiences high; on-the-job performance capabilities improve.

## REPRESENTATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL/COMMUNITY CHANGE INITIATIVES

**Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities** (Omaha, Lincoln NE 2009 – 2011): Supported JISC's grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund to design and deliver 19 Nebraska Sustainability Leadership Workshops across the State of Nebraska featuring the EcoSTEP Sustainable Indicators Tool©JISC and the Sustainability Leadership

Relational Leadership Model©SLI : followed by four Conversations Conferences about Nebraska Environment and Sustainability co-sponsored and hosted in selected Educational Institutions across the State. Ongoing Involvement

**Omaha Public Power District** (Omaha, NE 2002-2011): Collaborative consulting with high level managers and targeted work teams. Facilitated purposeful conversations leading to intended results in the form of: goals, roles, relationships and work process clarification and alignment; conflict exploration and resolution; strategic visioning and navigation through complexity.

**Midwest Child Care Association** (Omaha, NE 2006): Designed and facilitated two-day strategic planning retreat for executive director and staff members of a regional child care resource and education institution. Outcome was a clear focus of strategic funding and project implementation priorities for the next five years; 2007 implementation strategies currently on track.

**Leadership for Sustainable Development** (Eugene, OR, 2002/03): Facilitation of workshop hosted by the Institute for Sustainable Ethics and Economics in conjunction with the Sustainable Business Symposium, University of Oregon. Workshop designed for business leaders who choose to incorporate sustainability into their strategic goals for profitability and long-term business success.

**Benedictine University Identity Study** (Chicago, IL 2000): Facilitation of large-group appreciative inquiry conversation (175) that included university regents, president and other key administrative leaders, alumni, faculty, monks, students and members of the community to explore the future of Benedictine relative to its core purpose. Highly focused activities have emerged in the context of the first meeting as a part of this extended large-system change initiative.

**Nebraska Public Power District** (Brownville, NE, 1999): Facilitation of "Strategic Action Inquiry Process" in which employees and managers in a power plant facility engaged in large group dialogue needed to identify existing patterns of behavior and develop strategies to impact optimal performance capability. Plant performance was enhanced as collective purpose and actions were jointly created and enacted.

**United Arts Omaha; Joslyn Art Museum; Omaha Symphony Orchestra; Opera Omaha; Omaha Children's Museum and ArtsAIM** (Omaha, NE, 1993 – 2011): Facilitation of strategic visioning dialogues for numerous Omaha community arts organizations. Initiatives included Board and/or staff retreats, stakeholder meetings, interim tactical planning sessions, etc. Created the space for collective exploration and discovery that led to a deeper understanding of issues, creative strategy development, and implementation of actions that made sense in each unique context.

## REPRESENTATIVE TEACHING/FACILITATION EXPERIENCE

#### Sustainability Leadership Institute (2004-present)

- Conversations Conferences on Nebraska Environment and Sustainability, in collaboration with Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities (2010 -2011)
- Nebraska Sustainability Leadership Workshops, in collaboration with Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities (2010 -2011)
- Sustainability Leadership Workshops; Fort Carson Sustainability Conference, Colorado Springs, CO (2004 & 2005),
- Sustainable Communities Conference, Burlington, VT (2004);
- Leadership for Sustainability Course: University of Vermont, Burlington, VT (support role; 2006 & 2007),
- Keystone Leadership Summit, Keystone, CO (2005),
- Woodbury College, Montpelier, VT (2004)

#### University of Nebraska, Omaha, NE (1980-present)

Leadership for Sustainability; Leadership and Power in Organizations; Speech Communication in Business and the Professions; Negotiation Strategy Small Group Discussion and Leadership; Organizational Communication; Public Speaking Fundamentals

#### University of Hertfordshire, London, UK (2003-2008)

External Examiner, Doctoral Program; Complexity Management Center

#### Benedictine University, Lisle (Chicago), IL (2002)

Sustainable Development: Profits, People and the Planet, Organization Development

#### Professional Development Workshop and Seminars (1986 – present)

Advanced Leadership Skills Career Planning Cultural Change; Diversity Dialogue; Effective Delegation; Face-to-Face Communication; Employee Orientation; Handling Conflict; High Performance Leadership; Holistic Leadership; Leading Organizational Change; Making Presentations; Managing Accountability; Meeting Management; Mentoring Manager

### SELECTED AWARDS AND GRANTS

- Award: \$ 35,000, (2000-2001); National Science Foundation Innovation and Organization Change Program. Exploring the Social Construction of Emergent Change in a Complex Adaptive System: Co-Principal Investigator: (with J. D. Ludema and R. V. Tenkasi)
- Outstanding Project Award: Continuous Quality Improvement: High Performance Leadership; American Society of Training and Development (1992)
- Outstanding Thesis Award: University of Nebraska, Omaha (1985)

### SELECTED PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Ferdig, Mary A. (2007). Sustainability leadership: Co-creating a sustainable future. *Journal of Change Management*, Vol. 7, No 1: 25-35.
- Ferdig, Mary A. (2007). Holistic leadership: achieving results through expanded awareness. 2002 Midwest Academy of Management; Kansas City, KS.
- Ferdig, Mary A. and Ludema, James D. (2004). Transformative interactions: Conversational principles that Impact the quality of self-organizing change. W. Pasmore and R. Woodman (Eds.), *Research in Organizational Change and Development*. Stamford: JAI Press.
- Ferdig, M. A. and Ludema, J. D. (2001), Complexity and the social construction of organizations: New connections for a new time; National Academy of Management, Toronto, Canada; *Best Practice Paper Nomination*.
- Ludema, J. D.; Ferdig, M. A.; Griffin, T. J.; Mantel, M.; Rodriguez, R. (2000). Working together: Learning through collaboration (2000); symposium, Midwest Academy of Management; Chicago, IL.
- Ferdig, M.A. (1999). Leading change within complex organizations; Organization Development Institute; San Antonio, TX; *Best Paper Award*.
- Ferdig, M. A. (1996). Leadership and performance effectiveness: A study in human resource development; Organization Development Associates Meeting, University of Nebraska.